

APPROVED: Meeting No. 12-92

ATTEST: 

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
Meeting No. 11-92

March 16, 1992

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Public Hearing in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland, on March 16, 1992, at 7:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan

Councilmember James F. Coyle

Councilmember Rose G. Krasnow

Councilmember James T. Marrinan

Councilmember David Robbins

In attendance: City Manager Bruce Romer, City Clerk Sharon Gran and City Attorney Paul Glasgow.

Re: Public Hearing: Text
Amendment Application T-
121-91, Cycle Ventures,
Inc., Applicant.

The Mayor and Council conducted a public hearing on the application to amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow retail sales of bicycles as a permitted use in the C-1, Local Commercial, Zone. The Mayor and Council heard all those persons as can be found in the official stenographic transcript. There being no other persons wishing to be heard, the Mayor declared the hearing closed, with the record to be left open for two weeks, until the close of business on March 30, 1992.

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Re: Citizens Forum

At this time, the Mayor opened the meeting to hear from any citizen who wished to address the Mayor and Council.

1. John Tyner, President of Twinbrook Citizens Association, stated that a meeting will be held tomorrow evening at 7:00 p.m. at the Twinbrook Library concerning the proposal to close this facility. The Twinbrook Library Advisory Committee along with a number of other organizations, including the American Legion Post, will develop strategies to oppose this budget cut. Members of the Mayor and Council were invited to attend.

Mayor Duncan advised that the Montgomery County Library Board will meet on Wednesday, March 18, at 4:00 p.m. at the Rockville Library to discuss the proposed library cuts. Staff will attend both meetings, and the City will do everything possible to prevent closure of the Twinbrook facility.

In his role as a member of the Kiwanis Club, Mr. Tyner distributed invitations to the Mayor and Council to the 13th annual Las Vegas Night to be held on Friday, March 20, at the Gaithersburg Marriott. This is a fundraising event for the Treatment and Learning Centers.

At this time the City Manager, Bruce Romer, reported on the parking situation at Richard Montgomery High School and the City's proposals to provide additional student parking.

For some time now, approximately 20-30 cars have been parking daily on the property owned by Willco Construction located at the intersection of Richard Montgomery Drive and Jefferson Street, more commonly known as the "carnival grounds." The City has tolerated this parking even though it is prohibited by City ordinances which require all parking surfaces to be paved with either asphalt or a similar material. In early February, however, Public Works staff notified the property

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owner that the sediment run-off and earth disturbing activities caused by the daily parking of cars must cease. The property owner complied and erected a fence on the property.

The City Manager has sent a letter to Dr. Quelet, Principal of Richard Montgomery High School, proposing two no-cost alternatives. Additional parking is available on Mount Vernon Place located directly behind the school. This on-street parking abuts Elwood Smith Park and the school property and would accommodate 35-45 vehicles. A second alternative is the parking lot located within the Elwood Smith Park where an additional 20 vehicles could be accommodated. Taken together, these two alternatives should satisfy the problem of displaced vehicles from the carnival grounds.

2. Amanda Johnson, Senior Class President, and Mike Kovac, Student Government Association President, Richard Montgomery High School, advised the Mayor and Council that they feel that neither of the solutions are practical for the students. They indicated that the parking is not in the direct vicinity of the school and it is not safe to walk there, especially after dark.

Mr. Kovac stated that Willco was willing to allow the students to park on their property provided there was full indemnification to hold the property owner harmless. He indicated that MCPS would handle the liability issue. Richard Montgomery High School is willing to pay for gravel on the site to deter the sediment run-off.

Discussion followed regarding the current parking policy at Richard Montgomery and the fact that next year the parking requirements will be more stringent. No parking permits have been issued this year, and students park on a first come, first served basis. It was also discussed that the gravel would not be acceptable inasmuch as there would be a precedent set for other private property owners who would like to create inexpensive parking through gravel. Gravel roads are extremely

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difficult to maintain and there is no provision in the City's ordinance for such an exemption. Additionally, gravel would not solve the sediment control problem.

It was pointed out by Mr. Kovac that even if students availed themselves of the parking at the alternative sites for daytime use, a problem would still exist with respect to after school activities, night school and special events. A number of suggestions were offered to resolve this problem, such as providing preferential spaces for those students who stay for after-school activities, a lottery for on-site school parking, etc.

Mayor Duncan stated that the sediment control problem would not be solved by gravel, and, in fact, it could be made worse. To reverse the City's policy would set a dangerous precedent. He suggested that the School Board be requested to respond to the needs of the school in terms of additional parking and more lighting behind the school for security purposes.

Two viable options were presented by the City, and Mayor Duncan requested that the students be asked for their assistance in working together to resolve the parking problem. The City will await a response from the school to the proposals submitted in the letter to Dr. Quelet.

3. Betsy Johnson, 1523 Columbia Avenue, commented that everyone has been reasonable with respect to the parking problem at Richard Montgomery. As a parent, she stressed the importance of adequate parking for school events such as graduation, football games, etc. Mayor Duncan responded that parking for special events would be reviewed separately.

There being no other citizens wishing to be heard, the Mayor closed the Citizens Forum portion of the meeting.

Re: FYI/Correspondence

Wootton Parkway

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Councilmember Krasnow has received comments regarding a traffic problem occurring when vehicles are travelling east on Wootton Parkway to reach the Ritchie Center. Making the left-turn at the intersection into the center is extremely difficult and dangerous, and a three-way stop sign has been proposed as a solution.

The City Manager responded that this situation is being reviewed, and staff is attempting to gain a full understanding of the problem.

Councilmember Coyle indicated that people exiting the southern end of center by the 7-Eleven fail to stop at the stop sign and go directly into the intersection. This exiting problem should also be reviewed.

Councilmember Robbins was advised that the lighting on Wootton Parkway will be operational by the end of the month.

Falls Road Interchange Residual Parcels

Councilmember Krasnow commented that the proposed solution of the State Highway Administration (SHA) to retain the parcel lying east of I-270 for future use to improve the intersection of Maryland Avenue, Great Falls and Potomac Valley Roads raises many new problems. She indicated that the neighborhood would be heavily impacted by such an improvement, and she recommends immediate involvement of the City with SHA in this matter. The City Manager responded that we have done all we can do for now inasmuch as this is not yet a project and it may be years before it evolves into a capital project. He understands the desire to have adequate input with respect to whatever is designed and noted that the City will go on record that the neighborhood should have input early in the planning stages.

Councilmember Coyle referenced the second parcel and asked for a clarification of the

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language "until it is deemed not suitable for scenic or environmental enhancement." The City Manager responded that, under federal funding, there are a host of regulations concerning matters such as aesthetics, sound retaining walls and billboards. It is likely that a determination will be made that the property should remain vacant for aesthetic purposes rather than turning it over for development. The property has been well maintained by the State. Councilmember Coyle stated that if the State is looking at any use for this property other than its natural state, the neighborhood would want advance notice.

Re: New Business

Mayor Duncan reminded the audience of the meeting at Twinbrook Library tomorrow evening at 7:00 p.m. which is open to all citizens. Councilmember Marrinan referenced the proposal for Rockville library and asked if additional information was available. The City Manager reported that he has received information confirming the intent to relocate the Bethesda business collection to the Rockville library. If other services and activities were displaced as a result of this relocation, there would be an impact to the public in terms of general library services. It is hoped that more information can be obtained through the meetings scheduled on Tuesday evening at the Twinbrook library and Wednesday afternoon at the Rockville library.

Councilmember Coyle asked if staff had explored the possibility of locating recycling bins at the Congressional Plaza for residents of Congressional Towers. The City Manager will report back on staff's review of this matter.

Re: Next Meeting

At the general session held on March 23, 1992, there will be two street closing and abandonment ordinances for introduction, a resolution to establish the voluntary rent increase

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guideline, a motion to approve the 1992 Rockville Municipal Swim Center fees, adoption of an ordinance to disband the Alternative Community Service Commission, adoption of an ordinance to provide for a retirement plan for non-merit system employees and a discussion regarding parking at Courthouse Square.

Councilmember Marrinan wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day.

Re: Adjournment

Upon motion of Councilmember Coyle, duly seconded and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m., to convene again in General Session at 7:30 p.m. on March 23, 1992, or at the call of the Mayor.